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GREAT BRITAIN
AND THE
DUTCH REPUBLICS.

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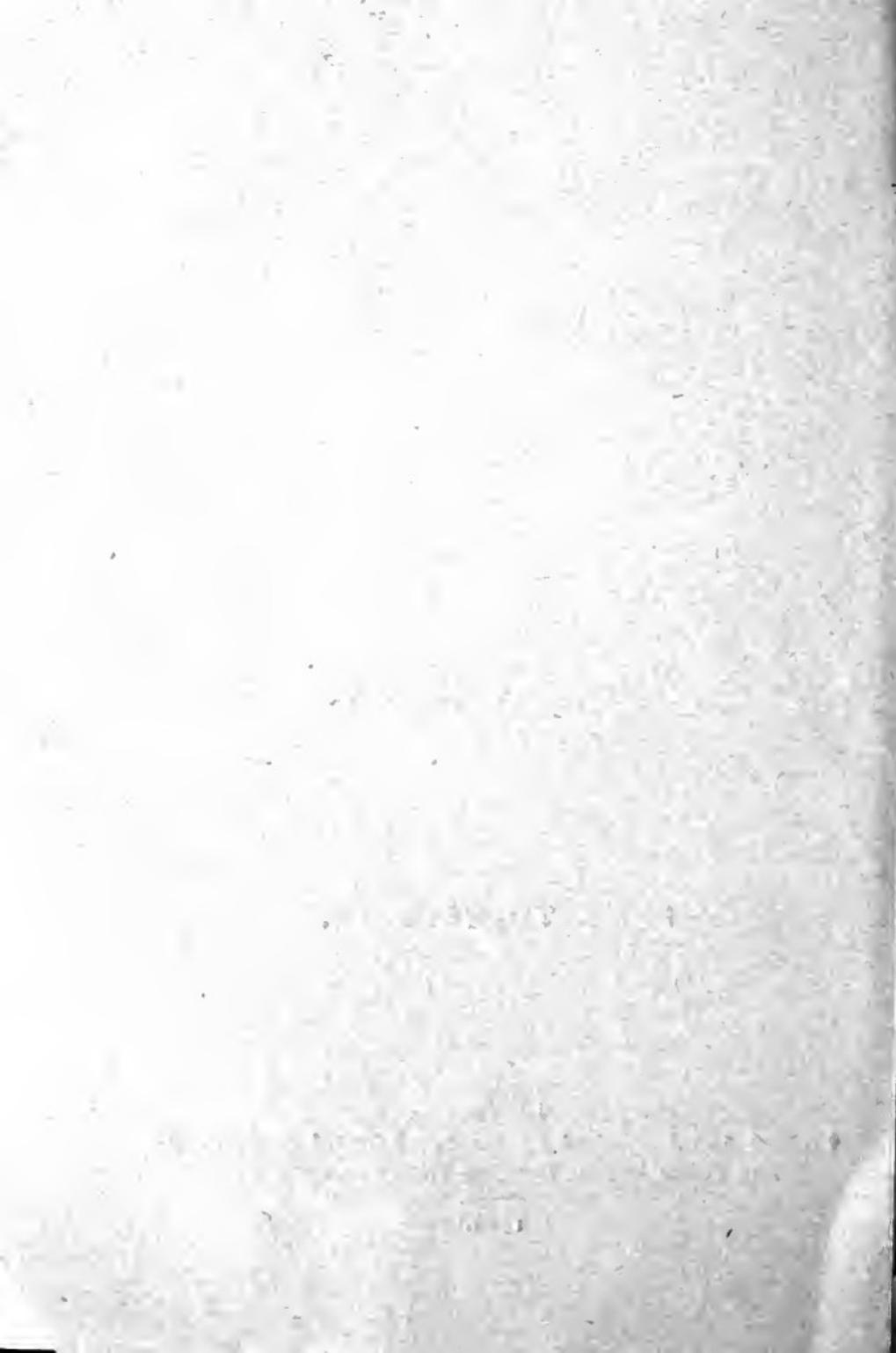
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GREAT BRITAIN AND THE DUTCH REPUBLICS.

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I.

INTRODUCTORY.

In view of President Steyn's New Year's message to the burghers of the Free State, alluding to the "enemy who has oppressed and persecuted us during the whole of the last century," and of opinions genuinely, and it may be believed sometimes reluctantly, held in certain quarters on the Continent, it may be useful to present a summary of the historical relations between Great Britain and the Dutch Republics of South Africa. The history of the South African States is so little known that even among British readers the facts are far from being so familiar as to enable the majority of Englishmen to understand on how strong a position this country takes its stand in the present war.

It is with the history of the Transvaal that we are more especially concerned. That history divides itself naturally into three sections—the period before annexation ; annexation ; and the period after annexation. Each of these forms a chapter in itself, and will be found to have its bearing on the actual situation.



Slavery was abolished throughout the British dominions in 1834. The emancipation of slaves without what was considered as full compensation gave rise at the Cape, as in the West Indian Islands, to an industrial crisis, and was the cause of very serious and, to some extent, legitimate complaint on the part of the large slaveowners. At the Cape the employers of slave labour were principally Dutch farmers, and their objection was not only to the dislocation of industry which resulted from the compulsory sale at a price below market value of their slave property, but also, and very strongly, to the philanthropic principle of equality which the abolition of slavery involved. There were also other grievances some of which were not altogether unlike those of which the Uitlanders of the Transvaal now complain. An important distinction between the grievances of the Dutch population of the Cape of that day and the contemporary grievance of the Uitlander is, however, to be found in the fact that the difficulties at the Cape had their rise in a period before the great Reform Bill, when many British subjects in the United Kingdom suffered under similar disabilities. While not minimizing any real cause of complaint which affected the agricultural population of Cape Colony, we must bear in mind that what was suffered was not suffered as the special hardship of an alien portion of the community. It was the common lot of British citizens similarly situated throughout the Empire. The world had not yet risen to the full



conception of the political equality of all citizens before the law. The Dutch of the Cape had never been a free community. They had been subjected before the British conquest to arbitrary rule from Holland, and historians agree that after the transfer of the Dutch colonies to British rule the institutions under which the colonists lived were far more liberal than they had been before. To the student of Imperial history the movement of the agricultural population of the Cape in favour of a larger measure of self-government will appear as forming part of a general movement in the same direction which made itself manifest at about the same period in the Australian and Canadian colonies and at home. It indicated not opposition to, but union with, the spirit of British institutions.

It is a matter of common knowledge that a large body, consisting of some thousands of the Dutch population of the Cape, decided in these circumstances to migrate from the settled portions of the Cape Colony into the then little-known back country of South Africa.

Great Britain, to whom the Dutch colonies of South Africa had fallen, in return for a large money payment, as a part of the settlement consequent on the Napoleonic wars, exercised a vague general authority over the interior, which, though the theory of *Hinterland* had not been formulated, was yet practically acknowledged. Nobody professed to have any accurate knowledge of where English possessions ended and Portu-

guese began, but their limits were supposed to be conterminous. This British claim forms an important element in the whole question. Recent controversies show how difficult it is to prove with absolute accuracy the extension and limits of spheres of influence in countries of which effective possession has not been taken by a white population, but while the terms in which these controversies are conducted are of comparatively modern invention, the facts underlying the terms have always existed. The distinction between "direct sovereignty," "protectorates," and "spheres of influence" has always been recognized. That Great Britain claimed as falling within her influence, though not within the limits of her direct sovereignty, the interior back country as well as the coast will be accepted as fact by all who are acquainted with early South African history. For present purposes it is enough to cite the Cape of Good Hope Punishment Act of 1836, by which offences committed by white persons in any part of Africa south of latitude 25° were made cognisable in the Cape colonial Courts. The latitude named is the latitude of Delagoa Bay, then, as now, in Portuguese possession, and exception is specially made in the Act of any portion of Portuguese territory which may extend south of the parallel of 25° . Nothing can be plainer than that the intention of the Act was to carry the limits of British influence to meet the limits of Portuguese influence.

Boer emigrants from Cape Colony were warned that within the limits of British influence they could not divest themselves of their quality as British subjects nor establish any form of government other than that of the Government of the British Crown. These warnings will be found recorded again and again in official documents. It was, therefore with full knowledge that they could not set themselves free of British government except by crossing into Portuguese territory that in 1836-37 the great trek began.

The emigrant farmers went first northward beyond the Orange River, and a party of exploration was pushed with incredible difficulty to Delagoa Bay. The main body established themselves, with heavy fighting against the Matabele, in the uplands of the Orange River and the Vaal. Others pushed across the Drakensberg Mountains to Natal, where the Zulus, under Dingaan, exercised a savage tyranny of force. Here, after massacre and counter-massacre, including the famous "Day of Weeping" and the Dutch reprisal known as "Dingaan's Day," the farmers succeeded in establishing a settlement, known for a short period as the Dutch Republic of Natalia, on the spot where Pietermaritzburg now stands. This settlement was not recognized by Great Britain, and the Boer leaders were informed that as British subjects it was not possible for them to set up a separate form of government upon British territory.

There was already a British settlement upon

the coast. The same strong feeling in favour of the recognition of the rights of inferior peoples which had brought about the abolition of slavery operated to rouse a strong, though not always just, abhorrence of the manner in which the Dutch emigrants treated the native races. Friction between the militant Dutch emigrants and the English protected natives brought the Boers in Natal into conflict with British troops. There was a preliminary success of Boer arms, but as a consequence of the trial of strength, in which the Boers were ultimately worsted, the direct sovereignty of the Crown was in 1843 extended to Natal, which was declared a British colony "for the peace, protection, and salutary control of all classes of men settled at and surrounding this important portion of South Africa." The boundaries of the colony were subsequently fixed, and in proclaiming them it was definitely stated that her Majesty the Queen was not to be understood as in the least renouncing "her rightful and sovereign authority over any of her subjects residing or being beyond the limits of that district." The Republic of Natalia was abandoned, and the majority of the Boers withdrew across the mountains to join their fellow-Dutchmen on the plains of the Orange Free State. The present Dutch population of Natal are the descendants of those who did not withdraw.

In the same year, 1843, as a further consequence of the British philanthropic design to protect and recognize the native tribes, a series of treaties

known as the " Napier treaties " established a chain of protected native States stretching from what is now Pondoland, on the borders of Natal, across the mountains and along the course of the Orange River to the territory of which Kimberley forms the centre. Basutoland in the mountains is the only one of these States which has survived in the originally constituted form.

Thus were established in British South Africa on definite lines the three distinctive forms of dominance recognized by modern international law. There was direct sovereignty in the Cape and Natal, protectorates in the native States, and a sphere of influence extending to 25° south latitude.

Within the British sphere of influence the emigrant farmers were in a measure isolated by a barrier of territory under protected native administration, and cut off from immediate touch with the British colonies and the sea. It was believed that the policy of isolating them in the interior was an intentional one expressive of the disapproval of the British Government of their attitude, and not unnaturally the British policy of favouring the Kaffir States was bitterly resented.

It was, in fact, a policy of sentimental philanthropy of which the development in this form was not long maintained. Kaffir wars upon the frontier of Cape Colony brought their lessons, and the next Governor of the Cape, Sir Harry Smith, prepared to substitute a policy of controlling the

natives and extending direct sovereignty over the settlement of the emigrant farmers. The native treaties were modified in 1847, and on February 3, 1848, a proclamation was issued adding to the dominions of the British Crown, under the name of the Orange River Sovereignty, the territory extending between the Orange and Vaal rivers.

But irritation between the emigrant farmers and the British Government had by that time grown too strong. A party of the emigrant farmers elected a certain Andries Pretorius to be their commandant, and rose in arms to establish the independence of their settlement. A battle took place at Boomplatz on August 29, 1848. The Dutch were defeated. The sovereignty of Great Britain was vindicated, and, as had happened in Natal, that portion of the Dutch population which was opposed to British rule withdrew from the country. They migrated under the leadership of Pretorius, to the country north of the Vaal, though they were again fully warned that that territory also lay within the sphere of British influence. The present Dutch population of the Free State is composed of the descendants of those who preferred to remain under British rule, reinforced by further emigration from the Cape. These in the case of the Free State formed a considerable body of the inhabitants.

Thus we have the formation and settlement of Natal and the Orange Free State, where in both cases only those settlers remained who were on

the whole disposed to recognize the advantages of British rule. The irreconcilable and turbulent sections in all cases drifted to the Transvaal. The sections of Dutch population which went to the Transvaal were no less bitterly antagonistic to the sections of their own countrymen which they left behind them than they were to British rule. Consequently intercourse was rare. The race of the Transvaal Dutch has from the beginning been to some extent differentiated from the remaining Dutch population of South Africa, and the history of the Transvaal forms a chapter apart. It will be seen that the lawless nature of its population continued for a long time to characterize the new settlement, and that when the Boers of the Transvaal had no one else with whom to fight they fought continuously with one another.

The autonomous existence of the Transvaal province was established in the following conditions. In the early years of the Orange River Sovereignty the British Government reaped the results of the encouragement which it had given to native pretensions. Hottentots, Tembus, Kosas, Basutos had all in turn at considerable cost to be subdued. The difficulties encountered in these wars made the whole movement of the Imperial extension extremely unpopular at home, and in the midst of the perplexities aroused by the necessity for active operations on the spot and lukewarm support from headquarters Sir Harry Smith found himself confronted simultaneously by an antagonistic movement of the Re-

publican faction in the Orange River Sovereignty and by a request on the part of the proscribed leaders on the far side of the Vaal that old differences might be forgotten and their independence in that territory be granted to them by a treaty of friendship with Great Britain.

At home the Little England movement was in full progress. Difficulties which culminated in the Crimean War were making themselves felt upon the Continent. The strongest objections were entertained in high quarters to any further projects of annexation. On the spot the daily difficulties of the situation were overwhelming. Accordingly in January of 1852 commissioners were sent to the Orange sovereignty. They met the representatives of the emigrant farmers of the Vaal on the borders of the Sand River within the northern limits of the Orange province, and after some discussion the treaty known as the Sand River Convention was signed on January 17, 1852.

The principal conditions of the treaty were that Great Britain agreed to recognize within the limits of her sphere of influence the independence of the emigrant farmers beyond the Vaal, with the understanding that there was to be absolute freedom for traders and missionaries to travel and prosecute their business on both sides of the river, and that there should be no slavery in the Transvaal.

Before turning to the exclusive history of the Transvaal it is well to note here that in 1854 the same inspiration from home which dictated the

grant of independence to the Transvaal dictated also the withdrawal of the Queen's sovereignty from the Orange Free State. This was done on the initiative of the British Government, and in the first instance in strong opposition to the wishes of the inhabitants as expressed through a committee or assembly of 95 elected delegates. The objections of the population were finally overcome, but not without widely supported protest of a most vigorous description. Many of the inhabitants declared their intention of nailing the British flag half mast high and holding out under arms until the question had been reconsidered by the British Parliament. But, notwithstanding the strong feeling which was expressed, British dominion and sovereignty over the Orange River territory was renounced by a Royal proclamation signed on January 30, 1854.

In this brief summary of events preceding the establishment of the Dutch Republics, there are three main points to be noted :—First, that the whole of South Africa up to 25° south latitude was, subsequently to the Napoleonie wars, definitely recognized as falling within the British sphere of influence ; secondly, that the emigrant farmers received repeated official notice that, though they were free to settle where they pleased, they could not divest themselves within the British sphere of influence of their quality as British subjects nor be permitted to establish an independent form of government ; thirdly,

that notwithstanding these conditions Great Britain did grant to the emigrant farmers the independence they desired and allowed them to establish within the British sphere of influence separate States possessing the form of government which they preferred. Such conduct on the part of Great Britain can hardly be qualified as oppressive.

(*The Times*, Feb. 9th, 1900.)

II.

THE TRANSVAAL BEFORE ANNEXATION.

By the Sand River Convention of 1852 and the Bloemfontein Convention of 1854 Great Britain thus brought into existence on a continent where her possessions had been supposed to extend until they met the territory of Portugal two independent white communities which took the names of the Orange River Free State and the South African Republic. It was an act performed by virtue of a potential authority over the whole and an established authority over a part, an authority which was beyond substantial dispute and which was in fact recognized by the acceptance on the part of the Dutch Republics of their independence as a gift from Great Britain. The Republics have had no other charter of existence. In neither case did they win their independence by force of arms. When they fought they were beaten. Their independence was granted to them

as an act of grace, an act which could only proceed from a paramount Power, and which, passing unchallenged, must in itself be held to constitute strong evidence of the historic rights of Great Britain to a position of supremacy in South Africa.

But their independence was granted upon conditions, and conditions to which immense importance was attached. These conditions, briefly summarized, were freedom for blacks and equal rights for whites throughout the conceded territory.

In the case of the Orange Free State they are believed to have been generally observed, and up to the time of the present crisis our relations with that Republic have been almost uniformly good.

In the case of the Transvaal the conditions upon which the Sand River Convention was granted were broken from the beginning. Under the name of "apprentices" the system of slave-owning was from the first carried on. "Apprentices" were natives—usually captured in native wars—who were legally bound to work without payment and who could not change their masters without permission. An Apprentices' Act passed in 1856 made this system law. Testimony as to the working of the system will be found in the complaints of Khama, the Christian chieftain of Bechuanaland, who had occasion to ask for British protection against it. The Boers, he wrote, "are coming into my country, and I do not like them. Their actions are cruel amongst us black people. We

are like money. They sell us and our children. The custom of the Boers has always been to cause people to be sold and to-day (this was written in 1876) they are still selling people. Last year I saw them pass with two wagons full of people whom they had bought at the river at Tanane." A clergyman of the Dutch Church, writing on the subject in a book published at Utrecht in 1869, describes the working of the apprentice system as constituting "slavery in the fullest sense of the word." A German missionary invited by President Burgers to report in 1875 summarized the description of the state of the natives by this sentence following upon a definition of slavery—"And if I am now asked to say conscientiously whether such slavery has existed since 1852 and been recognized and permitted by the Government I must answer in the affirmative." There is also on this head the famous testimony of Dr. Livingstone. The strongest evidence of all is perhaps to be found in a proclamation issued by Pretorius, the son of the rebel commandant in 1859, seven years after the negotiation of the Sand River Convention, in which he found it necessary to bring the provision made in the Convention against slavery to the notice of the local magistrates and to call upon them to take steps to ensure its observance. As a matter of fact during their frequent wars with the natives in these early years the Boers were little better than slave-raiders. Their own accounts of the

massacres which they conducted are almost too horrible for modern reading.

With regard to the promised freedom of travel and residence in the country for missionaries and traders the provisions of the Sand River Convention were no better kept. The Boer treatment of Dr. Livingstone is well known. His mission-station was attacked and looted. He himself only escaped death by a fortunate accident. Five other mission-stations were broken up in the same way. Traders were fined for publishing descriptions of the trade roads. A law was passed to prevent Englishmen and Germans from holding land. For 10 or 12 years after the passing of the Convention it was a declared policy on the part of the Boer leaders to cut off connexion with the world and to isolate themselves from civilized intercourse. This tendency of theirs has won for them a good deal of sentimental sympathy. But it should be remembered that it represents a direct infringement of one of the principal conditions of the treaty which brought the South African Republic into existence. At the time of the Sand River Convention the emigrant farmers, as they were then termed, had not been able to agree upon a leader. Rival factions disputed the principal power with one another, and the Transvaal was divided into the four Republics of Potchefstroom, Zoutpansberg, Lydenburg, and Utrecht, which were independent of one another, but endeavoured to establish some-

thing in the nature of common laws by the election of one Volksraad or Legislative Assembly. The result was not successful, and anarchy continued to prevail for eight years after the grant of independence. During this time they quarrelled with the Free State as well as with one another, and Paul Kruger was commandant of a force led against their Dutch neighbours. In 1860 the four Republics agreed to unite under one President, but shortly afterwards civil war again broke out, and it was not until 1864 that the Government of the South African Republic was finally established under the Presidency of Marthinus Pretorius. Paul Kruger became at the same time commandant-general. A reminiscence of the period during which the four Republics existed is to be found in the "Vierkleur," or four-coloured Transvaal flag.

When the Boers first went into the Transvaal the condition of the country is described by Theal as being not unlike that of Rhodesia at the time that Mr. Rhodes obtained his charter. The Matabele, who had previously terrorized the country, were driven northwards by the whites, and the lesser native tribes ventured from their hiding places in the caves and hills timidly at first and in apparent submission to the Dutch. But during the 12 years of anarchy which intervened between the grant of independence and the union of the country under a nominally settled government, the natives, partly emboldened by the quarrels of the

whites, and partly driven to desperation by the treatment which they themselves received, became unruly. A powerful tribe inhabiting the mountains to the north was the first to rebel, and for four years it taxed all the forces that Commandant Kruger could bring to bear against it. The Dutch population was obliged to withdraw from the district of Zoutpansberg and an unsatisfactory peace was concluded in 1868. Hostilities then broke out with the Baralongs on the western frontier. The Republic had little money. The long continuance of disturbance had interfered with the establishment of any practical system of taxation. The population was exhausted with chronic war. In 1871 the President, powerless to effect an arrangement of his difficulties, agreed to submit the western frontier question to British arbitration, and accepted an award made by Mr. Keate, the Governor of Natal. The award gave territory and independence to the native tribes, and also cut off an important district in the neighbourhood of the diamond fields, to which the Transvaal laid claim. The dissatisfaction of the Transvaal was so great that President Pretorius resigned and his place was filled by Mr. Burgers, who was a man of far greater cultivation, and, in an intellectual sense, superior attainments.

Up to this period in Transvaal history there had been no development in the ordinary sense of civilization. Lack of revenue had prevented the creation of the ordinary machinery of life. The salaries of officials were seldom paid;

there were no bridges, few roads, no public buildings, no telegraphs, no schools. The treasury was always empty. Commerce was carried on by means of barter, and taxes were not collected. President Burgers endeavoured to introduce a new order of things. He came to Europe and succeeded in raising part of a loan authorized by the Volksraad for the construction of a railway. He also engaged European instructors with the intention of establishing a system of education. He would seem, in fact, to have entertained the conceptions of an enlightened ruler, and to have desired to carry them into execution. But his people, rough in their origin, had become demoralized almost to barbarism by 20 years of savage isolation from all civilized influences. They had associated freely with Kaffirs, their habits had approximated to those of the natives, and President Burgers's schemes were wholly frustrated by the conditions which prevailed.

Another native war, led by the formidable chief Sikukuni, broke out. The country was exhausted by ceaseless fighting. The local system of "commandos," that is, of men commandeered to fight in the public interest, proved ineffectual. The President himself led an expedition against Sikukuni. Nothing could make his men keep the field. It was resolved to substitute a system of paid forces. To meet the expense heavy war taxes were imposed. They could not be collected. The country broke down under the strain. The interest on the public debt could not be paid.

Administrative charges could not be met. The one-pound notes issued by the Government as currency sank to the value of one shilling.

Without money, without men, with a fiercely triumphant native enemy within its borders, the condition of the Transvaal was almost desperate. At the lowest moment of the fortunes of the Republic it became evident that natives on all sides were preparing to attack. Sikukuni and other chiefs were in arms on the north-east, north, and west. The Matabele, though driven to the country now known as Matabeleland, were still unbroken in their martial pride. The Zulus under Cetewayo had declared their intention of invading the Transvaal from the south. Annihilation threatened the Republic. The alternative which lay before it was to pay the long reckoning of a quarter of a century and be wiped out by the blacks or to place itself under the protection of a stronger white Power. In its extremity an important section of the country, a section headed by the principal officials, turned to Great Britain for protection.

There can be no doubt in the mind of any one who reads the official reports relating to the annexation of the Transvaal that the transaction was carried through on the invitation and with the sympathy of the ruling factions, and it must be remembered that the Transvaal from the beginning of its history had always been ruled by faction. Unanimity in any of its public movements was practically unknown.

ANNEXATION.

To enter into the details of the negotiations which led to the annexation of the Transvaal would be outside the scope of the present sketch. President Burgers, in a statement made before his death, briefly summarized the situation by saying that the English party in the Transvaal urged forward annexation and that the Dopper party led by Paul Kruger allied themselves with the English in order to upset the reigning faction. He was anxious at the time of making the statement to repudiate his own share in the transaction. But it is perfectly clear not only from Sir Theophilus Shepstone's despatches but from the public speeches of President Burgers that the President himself was in favour of annexation. In his despatches Sir Theophilus speaks of the President " who has been all along in full accord with me," and again says " the President has from the first fully acquiesced in the necessity for the change." President Burgers, speaking to the Raad a few weeks before annexation actually took place, told the members in round terms that it was the Boers themselves who " had lost the country." " You," he said, " have ill-treated the natives, you have shot them down, you have sold them into slavery, and now you have to pay the penalty." And, " if you ask what the English have to do with it, I tell you that as little as we can allow barbarities among the Kaffirs on our borders as little can they allow that in a State on their borders anarchy and rebellion should prevail." After detailing

the miserable position of the country and declaring it to have been brought about because "they had lost faith in God, reliance upon themselves, or trust in each other," he advised them that to take up arms and fight was nonsense and that their duty was "to come to an arrangement with the British Government and to do so in a bold and manly manner."

Such language used by the head of the State can only be held to have one meaning. Thus we see the English faction, the Dopper faction (representing the local Opposition), and the official faction all combining to favour annexation. There remained a faction known as the "Irreconcilables," who would now probably be called the back-country Boers. The existence of this faction was held to justify some hedging on the part of responsible officials, and it was made a matter of diplomatic argument between Mr. Burgers and Sir Theophilus Shepstone that, while as a matter of fact the President was in favour of annexation, he should, to "save his face" with the Irreconcilables, publish an official protest. Here is the account given by Sir Theophilus Shepstone to his official superiors of the transaction :—

There will be a protest against my act of annexation. . . . You need not be disquieted by such action, because it is taken merely to save appearances and the members of the Government from the violence of a faction that seems for years to have held Pretoria in terror when any act of the Government displeased it.

You will better understand this when I tell you privately that the President has from the first fully

acquiesced in the necessity for the change, and that most of the members of the Government have expressed themselves anxious for it, but none of them have had the courage openly to express their opinions. . . . Yesterday morning Mr. Burgers came to me to arrange how the matter should be done. I read to him the draft of my Proclamation. . . . He brought to me a number of conditions which he wished me to insert, which I have accepted and have embodied in my Proclamation. He told me he could not help issuing a protest to keep the noisy portion of his people quiet. . . . Mr. Burgers read me, too, the draft of his protest and asked me if I saw any objection to it or thought it too strong. I said that it appeared to me to pledge the people to resist by-and-by, to which he replied that it was to tide over the difficulty of the moment, seeing that my support—the troops—were a fortnight's march distant, and that by the time the answer to the protest came all desire of opposition would have died out. I, therefore, did not persuade him from his protest.

Whatever may be thought of the wisdom or weakness of Sir Theophilus Shepstone in countenancing such a compromise there can be no doubt of the light in which it was presented to him, and of the attitude which it implied in official Transvaal circles. Outside official circles there was a strong agitation in favour of annexation and a petition bearing 3,000 signatures out of a total male population of 8,800, was presented in favour of it. The Act of Annexation, when it was proclaimed on April 12, 1877, was put in operation without force, and Sir Theophilus Shepstone was supported only at

Pretoria by the presence of 25 policemen. Shortly afterwards, the leading Boer officials, including Paul Kruger, but with the one exception of the present Commandant, General Joubert, took office under the British Government. President Burgers retired to Cape Colony.

As an immediate result of annexation the financial difficulties of the Transvaal came to an end. Interest on the public debt was paid. The Civil Service was reorganized, and an era of industrial prosperity was inaugurated by a considerable influx into the country of traders and others willing to invest their capital and energy under the guarantee of the British flag. The country was occupied by British troops and secured from the danger of local native rising. The Zulu war, of which the result was to destroy the military power of the most formidable of the native enemies of the Transvaal, followed in 1879 at a cost of upwards of £6,000,000 to this country. The power of Sikukuni was afterwards broken, and by the end of 1879 all the most serious conditions which had led the responsible authorities of the Transvaal to acquiesce in annexation had been removed.

The people had obtained the benefits of annexation. They had profited to the full by the change in their position from a bankrupt and friendless State isolated on the borders of civilization and threatened with destruction by savage enemies to that of the fully protected province of a wealthy Empire. In these circumstances the

opinion of the country underwent a change. Certain advantages had been bought by the sacrifice of independence. Having obtained the advantages the people began to wish to recover the independence which they now saw themselves placed in a position to maintain. A monster petition, bearing 6,500 signatures—amongst which must have been many that had been affixed to the petition asking for annexation—was despatched to England praying that annexation might be cancelled. In their previous dealings with Great Britain the Boers had been accustomed to find their requests acceded to, and their hopes of achieving a result satisfactory to themselves were in this instance encouraged by events at home.

In November of 1879 Mr. Gladstone began the Midlothian campaign, in which he condemned in the strongest terms the annexation of the Transvaal and practically pledged himself, in the event of his coming into power, to repudiate it. It is illustrative of the importance which may attach on the outskirts of the Empire to party statements made in this country that the portions of Mr. Gladstone's speeches referring to South Africa were reprinted and distributed on separate slips of paper throughout the Transvaal. His utterances were accepted there as a direct invitation to revolt. In March of 1880 the British Parliament was dissolved, and as a result of the elections Mr. Gladstone was returned to

power. The Boers, who had formally thanked him when in opposition for his sympathy, expected him when in power to meet their views. But in the Queen's Speech of May 20 the intention was announced of maintaining the supremacy of Great Britain over the Transvaal. The decision of the Government in regard to the matter was communicated by telegram to the British High Commissioner in the following terms :—"Under no circumstances can the Queen's authority in the Transvaal be relinquished."

Boer hopes had been raised too high to be abandoned. From this date the preparations for revolt were carried forward. The old system adopted towards their own Governments when unpopular or refusal to pay taxes was resorted to. The determination of the British Administrator, Sir Owen Lanyon, to enforce payment by the seizure of the goods of a recalcitrant farmer led to open defiance. A great meeting was held at Paardekraal in which Messrs. Paul Kruger, Pretorius, and Joubert were elected as a triumvirate to conduct the affairs of government, and on December 16, 1880, the independence of the Republic was declared.

War followed, which ended on February 27, 1881, in the British disaster of Majuba Hill. Four hundred and twenty British soldiers were on that occasion overwhelmed and driven from a strong position by a force of only 155 Boers. Small as were the numbers involved the inci-

dent was accepted as the pivot of the policy of the British Government. There had been no intention in the first instance to annex the Transvaal against the will of the inhabitants of the country. It was now taken for proved that the majority of the population of the Transvaal desired that the annexation should be cancelled, and it was determined to meet their wishes. The country was given back to them, and the compensation which Great Britain required for the heavy expenditure in blood and money undertaken on their account in the Zulu and other wars was contained in certain conditions attached to the retrocession. The Transvaal was no longer to be entirely independent. It was to have internal self-government subject to the suzerainty of the British Crown. Its frontier limits were defined. White men of all nationalities were to have equal rights with the burghers of the Transvaal to reside, travel, and carry on business in the country and were to be subject to no special taxation. Black men were to have freedom and their interests were safeguarded by certain other clauses. Adapted to the more developed features of the situation and with the important difference that the Transvaal was no longer to be an independent State, the conditions were in substance the same as those of the Sand River Convention—namely, equal rights for white men and freedom for blacks. Both of those conditions have been recognized as essential to the well-being of South Africa. Oppression of

the blacks had been found to result in native wars of which the disastrous effects were not confined to the borders of the oppressing State. It was impossible that a vast territory through which railways had begun to spread could be economically developed unless freedom of travel and equality of industrial opportunity were secured to the white inhabitants in all its parts. Equality of political rights, without which no true equality of industrial opportunity can be maintained, at that time existed in the Transvaal. Mr. Kruger was spokesman for the triumvirate when in conducting the negotiations for peace he undertook that political equality should be maintained, and satisfied with his assurance the British negotiators failed to require that an express provision regarding political rights should be inserted in the Convention that embodied the terms of peace. The Convention was signed in August, 1881.

It has been assumed that because after the Zulu and Sikukuni wars had been carried to a successful termination by British troops the Boers showed themselves genuinely desirous to regain the independence of their country, therefore there had never existed any strong desire for annexation. A study of the actual facts would seem to show that both desires were perfectly genuine. Until the power of the surrounding native tribes was broken and some sort of financial stability established, it was impossible for the Transvaal to exist as an independent community,

and if Great Britain had refused to annex, the desire on the part of the Transvaal for annexation would probably, under the stress of circumstances, have grown more and more keenly urgent. Great Britain has reason to regret that she did not wait. The desire of the Boers was perfectly wise. Annexation was an almost unmixed benefit to the Transvaal. Notwithstanding some inevitable blunders, Great Britain did for it in three years what, even if it had survived immediate danger of extinction, it might have taken 30 years to do for itself. But, the circumstances being altered, the purposes for which annexation was acquiesced in being accomplished, the revolution of sentiment was complete and the annexationists of 1877 became the independents of 1880. In both instances the British Government acceded too hastily to local wishes, and gained a *minimum* of advantage to itself. Far from being oppressive in its conduct it laid itself open to the charge of weakness, and in face of the retrocession of the country after so unimportant a skirmish as Majuba it cannot with any justice be accused of having shown a desire to impose its will by force upon a weaker people. The policy adopted after Majuba is now universally regarded as a blunder, but in relation to the Boers it was a generous blunder. British interests in South Africa have suffered severely from its consequences, but if it did nothing else it should have closed for ever the mouths of those who complain that Great Britain has oppressed the Transvaal.

(*The Times*, Feb. 13th, 1900.)

III. AFTER ANNEXATION.

It has been seen that the original settlement of the Transvaal was effected by a specially lawless residue of Dutch population sorted as it were twice over in Natal and in the Orange Free State, under the pressure of armed conflict with Great Britain, from their more peaceably disposed fellow settlers. Animosity to Great Britain, subdued only at recurrent intervals for purposes of self-interest, had from first to last constituted the keynote of Transvaal policy. This has not been the case with the general Dutch population of South Africa, and until lately there remained a marked division between the Dutch of the Transvaal and of other portions of South Africa.

Animosity to Great Britain was for a time subdued in order to obtain the charter of independence granted by the Sand River Convention. In the 25 years which elapsed between the grant of independence and annexation the conditions of the Convention were openly and continuously violated. Animosity to Great Britain was again subdued in order to obtain the benefits of annexation. These benefits were no sooner secured than the Dutch portion of the population rose in arms demanding that annexation should be cancelled. Great Britain acquiesced. The annexation was cancelled. In the year which followed the signature of the Convention of 1881

Mr. Kruger was elected President. Before annexation the Transvaal had hardly existed as a State. Its history, subsequent to annexation, has been the history of President Kruger. The nominal republic has been a despotism tempered by corruption of which this remarkable man has known how to keep the full control in his own hands. It is scarcely too much to say that from the day of his election the policy of the Transvaal has consisted of one long endeavour to escape from the terms of its engagements with Great Britain.

One of the effects of annexation in bringing the country from its previous condition of a semi-barbarous community to an organized State was to make the Transvaal better known to civilized Powers. In the years succeeding 1881, President Kruger began to cultivate foreign relations, and one of the earliest objections to the Convention was the inconvenience caused by the provision that these relations should be conducted only through British channels. A desire to escape from the control of the suzerainty and to establish his country as an independent State, having the same relation to the world at large which it had once enjoyed towards its fellow States and colonies in South Africa, very naturally followed from the enlarged view which President Kruger began to take of his own importance, and from a sense of the disadvantage at which he found himself placed in treating with foreign Powers.

Simultaneously with the desire for an enlarge-

ment of his political *status* came a desire for the expansion of his frontiers. Far more land had been allotted by the Convention to the Transvaal than its population has to this day been able to occupy, but looking to west and east and north and south Mr. Kruger coveted an extension of territory.

The first actual breach of the Convention took place in connexion with the observance of the western frontier bordering upon Bechuanaland. Here, within a few months of the signature of the Convention, bodies of Boers whom the authorities at Pretoria professed themselves to be unable to control raided the border, and within two years they had established in Bechuanaland two Republics known as Stellaland and Goshen. Attempts were made by the Cape Government to settle the matter by peaceful negotiations. These proved ineffectual, and ultimately it was found necessary to send out the expedition commanded by Sir Charles Warren, which, although no fighting took place, settled the matter satisfactorily in 1885. It may be incidentally mentioned that this breach of the Convention by the Boers cost Great Britain about £2,000,000 in money, as well as much trouble and disturbance on the borders of Cape Colony. The clauses relating to the natives were also disregarded, and a war with Mapoch, one of the northern chiefs, resulted in the distribution of no less than 8,000 natives as "apprentices" amongst the victorious commando.

Within two years of the signing of the Con-

vention it became evident that that document must be revised ; but it was not, as might have been anticipated, from Great Britain that representations to this effect proceeded.

Towards the end of 1883 the Transvaal asked permission to send a deputation to London for the purpose of reconsidering the Convention and of obtaining relief from some of the conditions which they felt to be onerous. The proposal was accepted and a deputation consisting of Mr. Kruger and two other delegates arrived in England in November of that year. The ambitions with which the delegates entered upon the negotiations are placed on record in a draft Convention which they presented for consideration to Lord Derby. The first of their desires was that they should be recognized as an independent State, negotiating on terms of equality with her Majesty's Government, such a recognition carrying, of course, the right to negotiate their own foreign treaties and to be free of interference in regard to native affairs. They were at once informed that neither in form nor substance could such a treaty as they had drafted be accepted. Independence was absolutely refused, the right of the Queen to veto their foreign treaties was maintained ; but modifications were granted in respect of some important minor points.

The negotiations resulted in a second Convention, of which "her Majesty was pleased to direct" that the articles should be substituted for the articles of the Convention of 1881. The

second Convention was signed on Feb. 27, of 1884. It has been the custom to speak of it as according complete internal independence to the Transvaal. As a matter of fact, it maintained the conditions of the Convention of 1881 in regard to the rights of aliens, the rights of natives, renunciation of slavery or apprenticeship, freedom of religion, and most favoured-nation treatment for British goods. Articles 8, 9, 14, and 19 distinctly lay down conditions which, if disregarded, would give to her Majesty's Government right of internal interference. There has been much discussion as to whether a direct expression of the suzerainty of the Crown was or was not retained in the modified Convention. The discussion may be dismissed as beside the mark, for there is no question that, whether the preamble containing the word was retained or eliminated, the substance expressed by the word was definitely retained.

The Convention of 1884 gave the Boers more than they had expected, though not all that they had desired. The deputation expressed themselves as satisfied with the outcome of the negotiations ; and Mr. Kruger signified his acceptance of the new order of things by the publication in the London newspapers of a cordial invitation and promise of welcome and protection to Englishmen who cared to settle in the Transvaal. To those who are behind the scenes it is known that this invitation was issued for financial reasons to reassure the British owners of Trans-

vaal mining properties whom at that time President Kruger thought it well to conciliate. Nevertheless, whatever his "reasons" for issuing the invitation, he cannot now repudiate his own act, or say with accuracy that the immigration of Uitlanders into his country was made against his will. In this, as in other bargains, he has reaped a very substantial benefit; and, having reaped the benefit, he appeals to the sympathy of the world to enable him to repudiate his share of the bargain.

It was at this period, after the conclusion of the Convention of 1884, that Mr. Kruger paid a visit to Holland and Germany, and also invited from those countries the immigration of Hollanders and Germans which has since played so conspicuous a part in the development of Transvaal affairs. The history of the Transvaal entered from this period upon a new phase.

The Convention of 1884 has been no better kept than the Sand River Convention and the Convention of 1881. The endeavour has, of course, been more or less steadily maintained to observe the letter, while the spirit has been persistently contravened; but there has been more than one important breach of the letter. This document laid down a rectified boundary of the Transvaal, which, by a special clause, the Transvaal Government bound itself faithfully to observe. Nevertheless, within a year it was necessary to send Sir Charles Warren's expedition, already alluded to, to the Bechuanaland

frontier. In the same year the Boers invaded Zululand, and the intervention of the British Government did not prevent the establishment across the border, in the most fertile district of Zululand, of the New Republic, which was recognized as a Boer State in 1886 and became part of the Transvaal in 1887. The question of the New Republic was no sooner settled in the Boer interest than the Transvaal authorities turned their attention to Swaziland, of which the independence had been specially guaranteed by the 12th Article of the Convention. Attempts in this direction were less immediately successful, but after many incidents, of which some had nearly led to armed intervention on the part of Great Britain, President Kruger's will ultimately prevailed, and Swaziland is now practically a dependency of the Transvaal. A similar attempt was made on the independence of Tongaland, upon the south-eastern frontier of the Transvaal, but the Queen of Tongaland sought safety in the protection of Great Britain, whose suzerainty she accepted in 1887. The next attempt to enlarge the Transvaal borders was made upon the northern frontier, when in 1890, one year after the grant of a Royal charter to Mr. Rhodes, an immense trek was organized for the purpose of establishing a Boer Republic in chartered territories. That attempt was foiled by the firm attitude of the High Commissioner and of Dr. Jameson, who met the trek on the Limpopo with a body of the

British Bechuanaland Police, while the High Commissioner informed President Kruger that for his people to cross the river under the circumstances would constitute an act of war. There remained still the native territories of Zambaan and Umbegeza on the east coast between the Portuguese boundary and that of Zululand. The final attempt of the Transvaal was made in this direction, but was met by the annexation of the territories by Great Britain, who extended the frontier of her protectorate to the Portuguese frontier in 1895.

All these attempts, it is to be remembered, were made in contravention of the strict agreement of the Convention of 1884, under which the Transvaal bound itself faithfully to respect the frontier therein laid down. The last hope of obtaining an extension of territory on African soil was thus closed to President Kruger in 1895.

In the meantime, events developing strangely within the Transvaal had given him, without extension of territory, an enormous aggrandisement of power. When he returned from his foreign tour in the latter end of 1884, he was in very serious straits for money. The old difficulties of the Transvaal were as acute as ever. Native disturbances were rife. Mr. Joubert, who had acted as President during Mr. Kruger's absence, on the return of the Presidential party resigned all the offices and placed himself at the head of a faction which charged Mr. Kruger's anti-English retrogressive policy with responsibility for the

"bad condition of the country," and has ever since remained as a thorn in President Kruger's side. The country Boers, as was their custom when dissension reigned between the higher authorities of Pretoria, refused to pay their taxes, and by the end of 1885 bankruptcy seemed once more inevitable.

But in the following year the discovery of gold was made in the basket formation of the Witwatersrand. The Rand was proclaimed as a gold-field on July 18, 1886, and from that moment the future of the Transvaal was changed.

It is impossible here to relate the history of the development of the Johannesburg goldfields. The material effect on the Transvaal can be perhaps sufficiently summarized in two sets of figures. The financial position of the State in 1884 was that it owed £396,000, of which the security was uncertain, and on which the possibility of paying interest was doubtful ; the revenue of the country was £143,000 ; the expenditure was £184,000 ; and there was the unpleasant fact to face that while the expenditure was already in excess of revenue by about 25 per cent. revenue had fallen from the preceding year by a very nearly similar amount. In 1897—before the financial position had been disturbed by the approach of war—the revenue had risen to £4,480,000 ; the expenditure was £4,394,000 ; and interest on a debt of £3,000,000 was, of course, assured. How substantially the Boers themselves as individuals have profited by

the change may be inferred from a comparison of the salary list of the two periods. In 1884 the salaries of officials were by force of circumstances a negligible quantity. But in 1886, the year of the gold discovery of the Rand, when the situation had already begun to improve, they offer a fair ground of comparison. In that year the total amount paid was £51,000. Thirteen years later it had risen to a total of £1,216,394, a sum which, according to a recent calculation, is sufficient to provide every adult male of the small Dutch population of the Transvaal with £40 a year.

So unprecedented a development of wealth could not take place without a complete change in the conditions of the country. As is well known, this wealth was produced from the gold-fields and their attendant industries, the revenue of the country rising steadily in sympathy with the output of gold. In 1887, the year after the work had been fairly started on the Witwatersrand, the value of the output was £500,000. Last year it had reached the total of £16,000,000. This result has been wholly effected by the industry of aliens, known in the Transvaal under the generic name of Uitlanders, the larger proportion of whom are British subjects. The Dutch inhabitants of the Transvaal have never themselves taken any part in the development of the mining industry. Nor have they permitted the Uitlanders to take any part in the administration of the country. Thus two distinct populations have established themselves side by

side, and a new Transvaal has grown up within the old. With the expansion of the gold industry the numbers of the Uitlander population have increased. At the end of 1895 immigrants were pouring into the Transvaal at the rate of 1,000 per week. The population statistics as published by the Transvaal cannot be relied upon, but the Uitlander population, which is largely composed of adult males, was believed before the war to outnumber the Boer population by a little over two to one.

Of these two populations, growing at an unequal rate side by side, the one supplied all the industrial energy by which the development of the country was assured, the other reserved to itself all rights of government and all the emoluments of official position. To state the situation is to show the inherent impossibility of its continuance. We have only to apply the conditions to the most stable European Government, and ask, What would be its fate if it ventured to govern in defiance of all the wealth, the energy, and the industrial interests of the country ?

It was inevitable that the Uitlander population should seek to exercise some influence over the Government of the country. Had Mr. Kruger accepted their advances and perceived the wisdom of incorporating the new element of population on a footing of equality with the old the progress of the Transvaal would have been far greater than it has been, and its independence as a cosmopolitan Republic would have

been almost certainly assured. His resistance to the Uitlander claim for equal treatment and his substitution for that sober policy of progressive development from within of a visionary scheme of impossible aggrandisement from without have created the present position.

The story of the Uitlanders' grievances, of their vain efforts to obtain reform by constitutional methods in the Transvaal, and of their final appeal as British subjects to Great Britain has been too fully before the public of late to need recapitulation in detail. Mr. Kruger has blindly refused to see the immense opportunity which lay at his hand. Great Britain would have co-operated with him cordially in building up and developing a Transvaal State loyal to its engagements and forming, for all practical purposes, a part of the British development of South Africa. The one thing which it was impossible for Great Britain to permit was the expansion of the Transvaal at British expense, or the political activity of the Transvaal as an instrument for the destruction of British supremacy in a part of the world in which the maintenance of her paramount position is of vital importance to the Empire.

But it has been to this impossible aim that President Kruger has misdirected his ambition. The last hope of obtaining an extension of territory on African soil was closed to him, as has been seen, in 1895, when British and Portuguese protectorates on the cast coast became con-

terminous. Already foreseeing, perhaps, this conclusion, he had turned his attention to more ambitious hopes of a foreign alliance which would enable him to counterbalance the power of Great Britain in South Africa.

In dealing with this phase of the South African question we are on uncertain ground and are unable to say with accuracy how much was done. Dr. Leyds was credited with being the principal instrument of this policy, and it is more than probable that Dr. Leyds may have had his own reasons for magnifying his achievements at European Courts. The fourth article of the Convention of 1884, maintaining the Queen's veto upon foreign treaties, rendered it impossible for any foreign treaty openly inimical to England to be concluded. There can be no doubt that an extensive secret service was established, and that emissaries of the Transvaal, more or less accredited, were busy on the Continent. Orders for arms were placed with European firms. Fruitless efforts were made to acquire Delagoa Bay as a Transvaal port, and substantial rumours were current that a South African rising backed by foreign support and having for its object the establishment of an independent United States of South Africa was in contemplation. It was known that the reorganization of the Transvaal forces was being placed in German hands, and there were various indications of a desire on President Kruger's part to secure

the alliance of Germany for the purpose of armed opposition to Great Britain. The immense supplies of arms and ammunition which were known to be pouring into the Transvaal and the construction of forts near Pretoria and Johannesburg were matters of uneasiness.

It has been frequently and incorrectly stated that the armaments of the Transvaal and the endeavour to effect a foreign alliance were the outcome of a mistrust of England roused by the raid. This is so far from being the case that one of the chief complaints made by the Uitlanders through the medium of the National Union in 1895 was that their money was being used for the construction of forts and for the equipment of an army which could only be employed for purposes opposed to their best interests.

In fact, of all the important results of the discovery of gold in the Transvaal, perhaps the most important, from the point of view of the Dutch Republic, was that it placed within the hands of a naturally warlike people the means to convert themselves into a fully-armed military State, organized and equipped on modern principles. Men had never been wanting for such a purpose, but modern military efficiency is largely a matter of expense, and it was only by the industry of the Uitlanders that the difficulty presented by the enormous cost of carrying out the scheme was overcome.

(*The Times*, Feb. 22nd, 1900.)

IV.

RUPTURE.

In 1895 the relations between the Boer Government and the Uitlanders had become so strained that the choice was on all hands recognized to lie between redress and revolution.

As early as 1892 Mr. Kruger had replied personally to an influential Uitlander deputation which had waited upon him, " Go back and tell your people that I shall never give them anything ; I shall never change my policy ; and now let the storm burst." In 1894 the Transvaal Raad confirmed this attitude of the President when it received a Uitlander petition for redress of grievances bearing 35,000 signatures with absolute refusal to make any concession and the assurance that if the Uitlanders wanted the franchise they would have to fight for it. All this, it must be remembered, was before the raid.

The Volksraad session of 1895, instead of ameliorating the position of the Uitlanders, made their position distinctly worse, and clearly revealed, by the laws and enactments which were carried, the fixed determination of the Government to effect no reform. In 1895 the capitalists of Johannesburg, who had hitherto held aloof, formally associated themselves with the Reform movement, and from that moment revolution became a certainty.

Towards the end of 1895 President Kruger,

notwithstanding the danger of his position, ventured on a step which was an open breach of the Convention. He closed the drifts or fords by which goods carried on the Cape and Natal and Orange Free State railways entered the Transvaal, intending by the act to force traffic over his own line by Delagoa Bay. He was informed by what was practically a joint ultimatum from the Imperial Government and the Cape Colony that his action could not be permitted, and he rescinded his declaration. That he should have made it is significant of two points—his readiness to separate the interests of the Transvaal from those of the other Dutch populations of South Africa and his intention to test British endurance to its limits.

In the first week of 1896 the movement took place with which was connected the regrettable incident of the Jameson raid. The telegram in which the German Emperor congratulated President Kruger on his victory at Doornkop was for the moment held to substantiate the rumours current in South Africa of a secret understanding between Germany and the Transvaal, and to justify all the doubts which had been entertained of President Kruger's good faith towards Great Britain. The excitement which followed the publication of the telegram was largely due to that impression and may be said to have marked the highest point of emotion stirred by President Kruger's intrigues for foreign support. The general understanding between Germany and

Great Britain which has been practically cemented by recent agreements removes that element of danger from the horizon. In the years which have elapsed since the raid President Kruger is believed in this country to have learned that neither from Germany nor from Portugal can he expect to receive encouragement in any project which involves the overthrow of British supremacy in South Africa.

The check received in this direction does not appear to have brought wisdom to President Kruger's counsels. He was not led to abandon his design for republicanizing South Africa. Orders for arms, instead of being diminished, were increased. So extensive did they become that two years more would have been required to complete them. The quantity ordered is said to be sufficient to arm the whole Dutch population of South Africa twice over. The building of forts was hurriedly pressed on. The drill and reorganization of the Transvaal military forces were carried forward under the charge of qualified European instructors. The military alliance with the Free State was strengthened, and political propaganda in the British colonies became more active.

Circumstances pointed, according to the best information which the British authorities have been able to collect, to an intention on the part of the Transvaal to complete its preparations and to bring the situation to a climax at a period of their own choosing about two years hence. By

that time it was hoped that the military forces of the Transvaal and the Free State would be placed on a broader footing, fully armed and drilled, that propaganda in the British colonies would have done its work, and that organization for the distribution of arms in disaffected British districts would have been complete. If there was no hope of a European alliance for the Transvaal, there was always hope that a moment might be chosen to strike the blow when European complications might render it difficult for England to exert her full strength in South Africa.

The war party of the Transvaal, getting out of hand, frustrated by precipitate action the execution of this plan, and the matter was, in a sense, taken out of the hands of the British Government. It was not by any determined protest on the part of the Imperial authorities that the complete preparation of the two Republics for revolt was interfered with. On the contrary, in this case as in all the others in which we have dealt to our disadvantage with the Transvaal Government, the principle of concession and toleration has been carried to its furthest limits. We had full knowledge of their armaments, but we allowed them to arm. We knew something of their plans and of the political propaganda which they were carrying on in the two British colonies, but with constitutional indifference to intrigue we allowed them to proceed. Throughout the negotiations of last summer there was hardly a moment at which, if they had chosen, the

Boer Government could not have obtained a settlement composing more than half our legitimate causes of complaint by a compromise that would have left the Boer position practically unaffected.

But under the inspiration of the more extreme members of his Ministry, and believing himself to be sufficiently prepared to have a substantial prospect of achieving victory in arms, President Kruger preferred the open defiance of an ultimatum. By the terms of his communication to the British Government of October 9 he arrogated to the Transvaal without disguise the position of supremacy in South Africa hitherto claimed and occupied by Great Britain. The plan of campaign of the Boers we have since been informed was to over-run Natal, trusting to an uprising of the Dutch population to place the entire colony in their hands, to attack Port Elizabeth and Cape Town, and in the event of failure, which was anticipated for these attacks, to withdraw to the Stormberg and Hex River Mountains, where it was believed that the position could be held "for ever" against any force that could be marched up from the sea. Foreign intervention, according to Boer calculations, was to do the rest, and give to an apparently desperate struggle its hope of ultimate success.

This scheme of military operations has been foiled, but the events of the last four months have demonstrated how well the Boers have profited by the opportunities which British industry within their borders first placed within their hands, and

which British instincts in favour of liberty and non-interference outside their borders allowed them to turn to full account. At the moment of the outbreak of war they commanded the strongest military power in South Africa. Not only so. During the long negotiations which preceded war it was held—rightly or wrongly—by responsible British Ministers that the prospects of a peaceful issue would have been seriously prejudiced by military movements on our part bearing the aspect of preparations for war, and that they best interpreted the feeling of this country by abstaining rigidly from such movements. Nothing can bear stronger testimony to the spirit of good faith in which the negotiations were conducted on the British side than the fact that the failure of the negotiations found Great Britain totally unprepared to provide even for the defence of her own colonial frontiers. President Kruger and his advisers took a different view of the situation, and under cover of the negotiations for peace the Transvaal Government took the opportunity of steadily and silently mobilizing its military forces, which were already massed on the frontiers of the British colonies at the moment of the declaration of war. We now know that the ultimatum of the Transvaal Government had been prepared for nearly a fortnight before it was delivered, and that the delivery was delayed by an unexpected hitch in the working of the local transport which prevented the Boer troops from concentrating on

the frontier quite so early as had been intended. Having made up his mind to fight, President Kruger is not to be blamed for completing his preparations and choosing this most favourable moment for attack. That is according to all laws of battle the inalienable right of the aggressor. But it gave him a great military advantage in the opening portion of the campaign. It has frequently been stated by Boer partisans that our military preparations drove the Republics to take the offensive, however reluctant they were to do so. The facts show this to be untrue. Our military preparations were a tardy reply to those which the Republics had themselves initiated.

The stubborn resistance which the Transvaal and Free State Dutch have been able, even under existing circumstances to make to British arms enables us to judge how formidable the movement in favour of a Dutch South Africa might have become had the warlike temper of a section of the Dutch people not intervened to prevent the maturing of the general plan. With the facts before him no critic of Great Britain can rightfully accuse British Ministers of having erred on the side of too hasty action in defence of the interests committed to their care.

Possibly, if our military preparations had been more complete and we had been prepared to take active steps immediately upon the outbreak of war, some of the terrible sufferings inflicted upon foreigners who found

themselves unprotected in the Transvaal and were forced under rifle and stock whip to choose between fighting in the Transvaal cause, or expulsion with the loss of all their property from the country, might have been averted. This is not the place for any detailed indictment of the conduct by which the population of the Transvaal must eventually be judged at the bar of civilization. It is enough to refer to the accounts of eye-witnesses whose foreign nationality will redeem their evidence from the charge of a possibly British bias. Among these we may specially mention that given by a Danish subject, Mr. Webber, and lately published in the principal newspapers of Denmark. Mr. Webber was one of 1,700 persons who were expelled in one batch from the Transvaal, having been robbed of almost everything that they possessed. He saw a little girl trampled to death ; he saw men, women, and children beaten with the butt end of rifles, stripped, spat upon, and prevented from obtaining either food or drink. His account of the barbarities endured is, unfortunately, not exceptional. Similar accounts from many sources appear to leave no doubt of facts which were of everyday occurrence during the period that succeeded to the declaration of war. These facts, and others relating to the treacherous abuse by the Boers of the white flag in battle and the habitual misuse or disregard of the red cross, intended to protect the sick and wounded, justify without further insist-

ence the conclusion that, however strongly such actions would no doubt be repudiated by an enlightened section of Boer opinion, the level of civilization in the Transvaal has been very seriously affected by long and intimate association with inferior races. We hear of many foreigners fighting in the ranks of the Transvaal. What we know of the methods by which those who were in the country were forced into the ranks suggests the assumption that amongst them there are many who have accepted life in the field as the lesser evil of the alternatives which were open to them. That a nation which has shown itself so conspicuously behind the other white communities of South Africa, not only in the commonly-accepted attributes of humanity, but in respect for international usage and in appreciation of the responsibility acknowledged by all modern Governments for the security of life and property within their borders, should attain, by mere force of military activity, to the position of a dominating Power can hardly be regarded in any neutral quarter as a consummation in itself to be desired.

CONCLUSION.

If a brief summary of the relations of Great Britain with the Dutch Republics serves no other purpose, it may at least help to dispel the illusion that the present military struggle in South Africa is taking place between oppressive Imperial might upon the one side and the natural right of a peaceful and pastoral race upon the other.

The facts of Transvaal history show that the Boers of the Transvaal are not to be confused with "the brave, patient, industrious, orderly, and religious people, the cultivators, the defenders, and the tax contributors of the country," whom Sir Benjamin d'Urban described in 1837 as forming part of the great emigration from Cape Colony. The majority of these settled in the Orange Free State and Natal, and have shown a general satisfaction in their relations with Great Britain. That the Free Staters should now espouse the quarrel of their countrymen is an effect not of British oppression, but of the natural instincts of race relationship.

The Boers of the Transvaal were the roughest, most adventurous, and most turbulent residue of a militant party who fought against British authority, first in Natal and then in the Free State. They withdrew across the Vaal and received a grant of independence from Great Britain, and for 25 years occupied themselves almost exclusively with fighting. They fought with the Free State. They fought with each other, they fought with the natives. The only people they did not fight with were the British, but they broke with impunity all the conditions of their charter of independence. In their wars with the natives they were little better than slave-raiders. They mixed freely with native women, and they lived their hard-fighting, semi-barbarous existence cut off from the rest of South Africa without any of the outward appliances of civilization. For nearly twenty

years there was not a bridge built over one of their rivers, and there was scarcely a road in the country. The consequence was a separation between them and their fellow Dutchmen in the neighbouring colonies and the Orange Free State, and an approximation of their character and habits to the character and habits of the Kaffirs. This is a feature of the situation which up to the time of the present war was keenly felt by the other South African Dutch.

This isolated people lived for five and twenty years carrying on their hand to hand duel with the natives, and were only just beginning to turn their thoughts under the enlightened rule of President Burgers to some of the initial requirements of civilized government when they found themselves in danger of being wiped out of South Africa. The native tribes all round them were in arms. Their own levies were melting from the field. They had neither men to fight as volunteers nor money to pay for a military force raised on modern lines. Their own people refused to pay taxes. They were deeply in debt. In this extremity they turned to Great Britain and asked to be taken under her protection. The condition of protection was annexation, and a petition in favour of annexation was signed by nearly half the male population. The Executive Government and principal officials and practically all the reflective part of the population were in favour of the change.

The annexation of the Transvaal to Great

Britain was proclaimed and the change was effected in absolute peace. No force was used or displayed. The principal officials of the Transvaal Government, including Mr. Paul Kruger, took office under the British Government. The new Government restored the finances of the country, fought the Zulus, fought Sikukuni, and broke for ever the power of surrounding native tribes.

Then when the advantages of annexation had been reaped, when the dangers of bankruptcy and annihilation had been averted, and the militant energies of the Boer people had had time to recover, the bargain with Great Britain was repudiated. Annexation no longer seemed desirable. Revolution and a declaration of independence followed.

Great Britain, from the beginning of her relations with the Transvaal, had shown the clearest desire to abstain from interference. Under somewhat modified conditions, she has displayed in her relations to the Dutch Republics the same spirit of tolerance and respect for local wishes which has rendered possible within the Empire the unique growth and development of our great self-governing colonies. If the Transvaal had been willing, as our colonies have been willing, to take freedom, of which itself should set the measure, and to give loyalty to its engagements in return, there need have been no more friction between us and the Dutch outside the Empire than there has been between us and British colonists within the Empire.

The grant of independence to the emigrant

farmers had been made in 1852 without any trial of strength and purely as an act of grace, dictated by a policy which desired to assume no further responsibilities in South Africa. The flagrant and habitual violation of the conditions under which independence was granted had been passed over without remonstrance. It was not till the hostile attitude of the Zulus and other native tribes threatened the Transvaal with extinction and presented a serious danger to British South Africa that any thought of intervening in Transvaal affairs was entertained. Intervention then was made in response to an invitation from the Transvaal, and that this was so in fact as well as in name was demonstrated by the absolutely peaceful manner in which annexation was effected.

We spent upwards of £6,000,000 on the Zulu war, as well as many British lives. Having done that, having restored industrial and financial prosperity to the country and found at the end of our exertions that a change in public opinion had taken place, and that the Boers of the Transvaal desired that the independence of their country should be restored, we gave it back subject only to certain conditions which were judged to be essential in order to prevent the recurrence of a similar crisis at any future date.

The forces engaged on the British side at Majuba numbered less than 500 men. We had 12,000 troops upon the sea. There can be no reasonable contention that that concession was in any way forced from us by the

issue of so unimportant a skirmish in arms. We gave the Transvaal back her autonomy after Majuba because the development of events had convinced the British statesmen responsible for the conduct of affairs that the revolt which had culminated at Majuba was not the mere insubordination of a faction but expressed the sentiment of Dutch South Africa. Nothing could more clearly demonstrate our desire to act in accordance with that sentiment. Lord Kimberley's explanation, given the other day, adds nothing to and takes nothing from this view.

In view of all that the annexation of the Transvaal had cost us we had a right to safeguard the future peace of South Africa and the future position of Great Britain by imposing certain conditions upon the retrocession. It is difficult to imagine conditions less onerous than those which were embodied in the terms of peace of the Convention of 1881. But the Transvaal had no sooner been given back than these conditions were broken.

Great Britain was the party aggrieved. Nevertheless, Great Britain agreed to revise the conditions of 1881, bringing them more into accordance with Dutch wishes. Accordingly a fresh convention embodying important concessions was negotiated in 1884. Within a year a breach of the new conditions necessitated the despatch of the Warren expedition at a cost of nearly £2,000,000 to this country. The very liberality of our terms of internal independence to the Transvaal made it essential that

the territorial limits within which that independence should be exercised should be clearly defined. The Convention of 1884 defined the boundaries of the Transvaal. The Transvaal Government bound itself faithfully to observe the frontier limits then laid down. There is not one of its frontiers on which it has not since attempted to extend its limits. In two cases it has made the attempt with conspicuous success. There is scarcely a provision of the Convention which the Transvaal Government has not either broken or attempted to break. It has openly defied the provisions intended to secure the equality of white men within its borders. It has subjected British subjects to humiliating disabilities. It endeavoured in 1895 to close its frontiers to British trade. It has steadily pursued an anti-British policy. It has openly declared the intention of protecting the interests and cultivating the friendship of foreign nations in a spirit of opposition to Great Britain. It has spent enormous sums in preparing itself for an armed conflict with Great Britain. It has finally thrown off the mask and, having drawn the Orange Free State, which had not even the shadow of a quarrel with Great Britain, into an alliance, it has declared the design of inducing British South Africa to throw off its allegiance to the Queen.

The one occasion during 50 years of mutual history in which the part of the Transvaal has not been that of aggressor or of suppliant for favours is the unfortunate incident of the Jameson

raids. No justification can be offered for what actually occurred on that occasion. In the circumstances Dr. Jameson had no right to cross the frontier. But it has to be remembered that his action, however unjustifiable, was a consequence and not a cause. The internal revolt in which his co-operation had been sought had been induced by conditions for which the Transvaal Government alone was responsible. It was the unwillingness, not the readiness, of the British Government to intervene which threw the foreign population of the Transvaal on its own resources ; and, though it has been sought to attribute to the mistrust and irritation caused by the Jameson raid the policy which has culminated in the armament of the Transvaal, facts do not bear out this assumption. Long before the date of the raid the Transvaal Government had begun to arm and had placed the reorganization of its military forces in the hands of competent foreign instructors. It was one of the leading complaints of the Uitlanders in the years preceding the raid that so large a portion of their money was being spent in military preparations. As the Transvaal was an internal Power whose foreign relations were in British hands such armaments could only be directed against Great Britain; and in South Africa the defiance involved by the preparations was not misunderstood. It would be more accurate to say that the armament of the Transvaal produced the Jameson raid than that the Jameson raid produced the armament of the Transvaal.

From first to last it can be shown that the history of the Transvaal has been one long aggression upon its neighbours' rights. Never perhaps in history has a dominant Power showed itself more tolerant or more generous than Great Britain in its dealings with this little State. Whether this tolerance has been prompted by motives of interest or motives of sentiment is practically immaterial. The Transvaal in either case has benefited by the result.

That the Transvaal should now be conducting—with a stubbornness and bravery that we all admire—a practically hopeless struggle in arms against the greater Power roused at last, is but a supreme expression of the militant spirit by which the Boers of the Transvaal have always endeavoured to dominate the surrounding peoples. Domination, not independence, has been their aim.

The history of the two peoples shows that Great Britain has not only tolerated, she was in early days anxious to promote, the independence of the Dutch Republics. She has never desired to interfere with that independence. Up to the moment of the declaration of war she had no quarrel of any kind with the Orange Free State. But the predominance of any other Power in South Africa is incompatible with the maintenance of the position won for this Empire at the cost of blood and treasure freely poured out by generations of Britons. In defending this position Great Britain has a right to look for the sympathy and moral support

of Continental nations. For what is incompatible with her interests is also incompatible with theirs. The predominance in South Africa of a Power based on military aggression would be a source of constant danger to territorial neighbours on every side. Peace, good order, and equality of industrial opportunity represent practically the demands of the civilized world in South Africa. The Republic beyond the Vaal has signalized its short existence by a blank refusal to satisfy these demands in the territory which lies under its rule. The extension of Dutch influence would necessarily mean a corresponding restriction of the development of the resources of the country. Great Britain, on the other hand, has been the guardian of these general interests since she first established herself at Cape Town. Her ascendancy in South Africa is a guarantee to Europe that from the Zambesi to the Indian Ocean every citizen of every nationality shall enjoy the same protection and profit by the same opportunity as if he lived under the shadow of his own flag. Advantages which are freely shared give no occasion for envy, and none know better than our Continental neighbours that South Africa British is South Africa open to the world.

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